

**Remarks made by H.E. Mr. ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) in Tokyo on the Occasion of the 9<sup>th</sup> African Festival Yokohama 2016 on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016:**

Mr. Edwin Matey Cofie, Chairman  
African Festival Yokohama  
Organizing Committee

Mr. Hirofumi SATO, Chairman  
Japan – Africa Friendship Yokohama City Council Members' League)

Ms. Kazue NAKAYAMA, DG  
Culture & Tourism Bureau City of Yokohama

Mr, Seiji OKADA, Deputy DG  
African Affairs Department MoFA

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me first congratulate the organizing committee, on behalf of the African Diplomatic Corps and myself, for their success to hold the 9<sup>th</sup> African Festival Yokohama 2016 for three days starting today.

The organizers expect more than 20,000 local folks, from all walks of life; will visit the different events held in this festival. Therefore, this people to people diplomacy and different activities held in this forum are expected to further help and enhance the better understanding of Africa and African countries by the public.

Citizen exchanges are an easy and cost-effective means for Japan to build and export its soft power influence to Africa and vice versa. It is one of the key pillars through which sustainable communication between African countries and Japan can be assured and maintained.

As you all know, the Tokyo International Conference on African development (TICAD IV) will take place in Nairobi, Kenya on 27-28 August 2016. We hope and wish this event of today would contribute to the participation of the local folks in this coming event. In the past five TICADs held in Tokyo and Yokohama there was a high participation of the private sector and the public. The same solidarity and participation is expected in Nairobi side events that will be held during this time.

Therefore let me take this opportunity to call upon and to invite the citizens of Yokohama in particular and Japan in general; as well the organizers of this event, to go to Nairobi and make TICAD tradition a success in Africa.

Thank you very much for the invitation extended to the African Diplomatic Corps to participate and let me wish to the organizers the successful conduct of this event once again.